SOPHISTICATED SUSPENSE
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SWAMP THING
BY ALAN MOORE,
STEPHEN BISSETTE
AND ALFREDO ALCALA
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WHAT DO THEY THINK ABOUT, IN THEIR BEDS BENEATH THE GROUND?

WHAT DO THE DEAD PEOPLE THINK ABOUT?

WHEN THE SUMMER EARTH SHELTERS, WHEN ROOTS PRESS AGAINST THEIR BACKS LIKE CABASES IN THE BEDSHEETS...

WHEN SLEEP WON'T COME, WHAT NOTIONS DO THEY ENTERTAIN IN THOSE FRAIL PARCHMENT BULBS THAT ONCE WERE SKULLS?

THE PARTY CONTINUES OVERHEAD, WITH SONGS HEARD BEFORE AND DANCES LONG SINCE WEARIED OF.

SLUMBERING BELOW, IS IT A CONSOLATION THAT AS WITH ROOTS AND TREES, ALL THINGS ABOVE ARE DETERMINED BY WHAT LIES BURIED BENEATH?

DREAMING AMONGST THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE WORLD, ARE THEY CONTENT? DO THE YELLOWING RIBS STILL GRATE TOGETHER IN A NOSTALGIC PARODY OF BREATH?

DO THE DRY SOCKETS THIRST FOR ONE FINAL GLIMPSE OF SKY?

TONGUELESS, DO THEY FONDLY REPEAT OLD DIALOGUES, HEADSTONES TILTING TOGETHER TO SHARE A GRIEVANCE?

WHAT DO THEY TALK ABOUT, IN THEIR BEDS BENEATH THE GROUND? WHAT DO THE DEAD PEOPLE TALK ABOUT...

... AND WHICH VOICES ARE THE LOUDEST?

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"CHARLOTTE, YOU ARE TAINTED. YOU ARE REPULSIVE TO ME. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

"REPULSIVE.

"THIS...THING THAT YOU HAVE CONSORTED WITH IS LOWER THAN AN ANIMAL!

"BETWEEN YOU, YOU'VE FOULED THE NAME OF ROBERTALAND. YOU ARE NO LONGER FIT TO BEAR MY CHILDREN."

"OH, NO, OH, WESLEY, PLEASE..."

"NOW...CHARLOTTE HERE HAS OFTEN SAID THAT WE'RE ALL NO DIFFERENT BENEATH THE SKIN. I PROPOSE WE PUT THAT TO THE TEST.

"TAKE THIS CREATURE DOWNSTAIRS TO THE CELLAR AND FLAY IT."

"OH, GOD, WESLEY, DON'T..."

"MR. JACKSON... PLEASE, MR. JACKSON, I DIDN'T MEAN NO HARM. THE LADY ASKED ME IN..."

"MRS. JACKSON, TELL THEM TO LET GO OF ME..."

"WESLEY, I'LL DO ANYTHING! PLEASE STOP IT! PLEASE, WESLEY..."

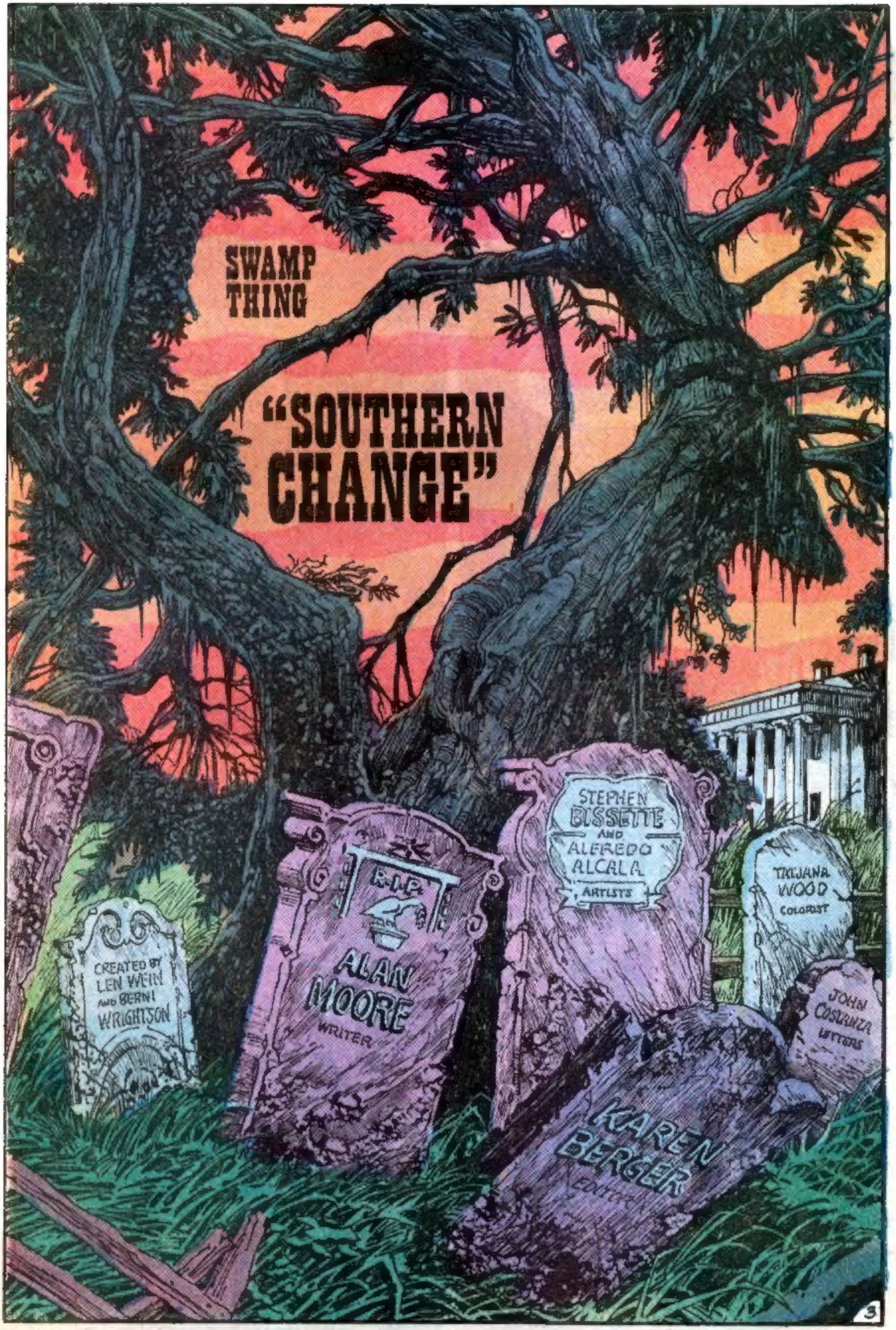
"WESLEY? YOU'RE HURTING MY ARM! WHERE ARE YOU TAKING...?"

"YOU'RE COMING TO WATCH, CHARLOTTE. ALL RIGHT...OVER BY THAT POST WILL DO FINE..."

"NO! NO NO NO NO NO! OH, GOD..."

"NOW...

"SHALL WE BEGIN?"


SWAMP THING
"SOUTHERN CHANGE"
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JULY 25TH, 1985.

FEAST of PAPAOGOU

ALEC?

YES?

COULD YOU RUN THAT BY ME AGAIN, ABOUT CONSTANTINE MAYTIMS YOU TO COME HOME TO LOUISIANA?

Y'KNOW, IT SOUNDS TO ME LIKE HE'S JUST LEADING YOU AROUND BY THE NOSE...

HE CLAIMS... THE DARKNESS THAT IS STIRRING WITHIN THIS COUNTRY... WILL SHORTLY... MANIFEST ITSELF HERE...

PERHAPS... HE TELLS THE TRUTH.

HAVE YOU... NOTICED ANYTHING...?

NOPE. EVEN THE KIDS UP AT THE HOME HAVE BEEN QUIET LATELY. IT'S SHAPING UP INTO A GOOD SUMMER.

I HEAR EVEN THE WORK SITUATION'S LOOKING UP A LITTLE SINCE THE T.V. PEOPLE ARRIVED...

T.V....?

YEAH. THEY'RE DOING THIS BIG NEW SOAP OPERA THAT'S GONNA KNOCK DYNASTY RIGHT OUT OF THE NIELSENS...

IT'S THIS SORT OF HISTORICAL THING ABOUT THE PLANTATIONS. THEY'RE SHOOTING IT UP AT THE OLD JACKSON HOUSE.

ALSO, THEY'RE CASTING LOTS OF LOCAL BLACK PEOPLE AS SLAVES, BECAUSE OUTSIDERS DON'T "LOOK RIGHT".

SO, LIKE, ALL THESE DESCENDANTS OF LIBERATED SLAVES ARE EARNING GOOD MONEY BY BECOMING SLAVES AGAIN!

IS THAT FUNNY, OR SAD?

IT'S HUMAN.

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CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

YEAH, I GUESS, I WAS THINKING OF Y'KNOW, GOING BY OVER THERE, JUST TO HANG OUT AND GAWK AT THE CELEBRITIES...

ANGELA LAMB IS IN IT, AND RICHARD DEAL, AND BILLY CARLTON...

UH, NOBODY YOU'D KNOW...

ALEC, THIS TRAVELING BUSINESS... LETTING YOUR BODY DIE IN ONE PLACE AND GROWING A NEW ONE SOMEWHERE ELSE...

DOESN'T IT MAKE YOU FEEL SORTA DISCONNECTED?

DISCONNECTED...?

WELL, YEAH. I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT OF YOUR BODY AS YOU, BUT NOW IT'S JUST SOMETHING YOU DRESS UP IN OCCASIONALLY.

I DUNNO... SOMETIMES I FEEL AS IF YOU'RE SOMEWHERE ELSE AND I'M HUGGING YOUR JACKET.

NO...

IT'S HUMAN.

I AM... CHANGING, ABBY... BUT I KNOW... THAT WHATEVER I CHANGE INTO... IT WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU...

THIS DISQUIET THAT YOU FEEL... IS UNNECESSARY...

IT'S HUMAN.

SOMEONE DID SOME TESTS TO MAKE SURE. BLOODSTAIN MUST BE MORE THAN A CENTURY OLD...

OH, THAT'S JUST REPULSIVE.

WELL, I GUESS THEY'LL CLEAN THE WHOLE PLACE UP BEFORE SHOOTING STARTS, SO IT WON'T OFFEND YOU FOR MUCH LONGER...

WATCH THAT STEP THERE... IT'S ROTTED...

I WISH THEY'D CLEAN UP SOME OF THE EXTRAS.

ANGELA, YOU KNOW THAT'S AN INCREDIBLY RACIST COMMENT...

OH, SO I'M RACIST, BUT CARLTON'S BLACK POWER STUFF IS OKAY BECAUSE HE'S BLACK, RIGHT?

HONESTLY, RICHARD, EVERYTHING HE SAYS, YOU JUST LAP IT UP. IT'S PATHETIC!

OH, NOW LOOK, THAT'S REALLY OVER-SIMPLIFYING A COMPLEX POLITICAL SITUATION...

OH, GOD, RICHARD, GROW UP.

♪ Stand up next to a mountain... chop it down with the edge o'my hand... ♪

♪. Say stand up next to a mountain... chop it down with the edge o'my hand.. ♪

ANYWAY, IF YOU'RE SO AVERSE TO BILLY CARLTON, HOW COME YOU SIGNED UP FOR A SERIES PLAYING LOVE SCENES OPPOSITE HIM?

IF YOU'RE SO AVERSE TO RACISM, HOW COME YOU SIGNED UP TO PLAY A SLAVE BOSS?

I'M DOING IT FOR THE MONEY, YOU TWIT!

PLUS, I GET A STAND-IN FOR THE PHYSICAL CONTACT SCENES...

I DON'T CARE HOW BIG SHE IS, OR HOW GOOD SHE'LL BE FOR THIS SERIES! THAT WOMAN IS A SOW AND A BIGOT, AND I AIN'T TOUCHIN' HER, UNDERSTOOD?

SO WE USE A STAND-IN! NO PROBLEM!

MAN, I DON'T SEE NOTHIN' BUT PROBLEMS! LOOK AT THIS PLACE... HOW LONG'S IT BEEN STANDIN' EMPTY, FALLIN' APART LIKE THIS?

BILLY, WE CAN FIX IT. LISTEN, TRY TO RELAX AROUND THIS SERIES A LITTLE...

FRANKLY, SINCE "BREAKING EVEN" DIDN'T DO SUCH GREAT BOX, YOUR CAREER NEEDS A SERIES LIKE THIS...

THAT'S IRRELEVANT! I'M DOIN' THIS SHOW SO I CAN MAKE A POLITICAL STATEMENT! NOTHING ELSE MATTERS, EXCEPT...

UH...

BILLY?

HEY, BILLY, WHAT'S WITH YOU? YOU SPACED OUT OR SOMETHIN'?

LISTEN, AFTER "BREAKING EVEN" I THOUGHT WE HAD AN AGREEMENT: NO BLOW AROUND THE SET, RIGHT?

WHAT?

BILLY, BILLY, BILLY... WHY DO YOU DO THIS TO ME? COME ON... LET'S GET OUTSIDE IN THE FRESH AIR.

AND LISTEN... DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE SERIES, LIKE THE LADY SAID, "TOMORROW IS ANOTHER DAY."

July 26th

Mystère de Grande Saint Anne

PHAA

HEY, ARE YOU COMING IN? IT'S *TERRIFIC!*

NO.

AT NIGHT... I DO NOT DRY SO QUICKLY... AND WHEN... I AM SATURATED... I FEEL HEAVY... AND UNCOMFORTABLE...

SO? LET THE WET BODY DRY AND GROW A DRY ONE. WHO'S WATCHING?

I... DO NOT THINK SO... YOU... WERE RIGHT EARLIER...

I MUST... *RESTRAIN* MYSELF... IN THE USE OF THESE ABILITIES... LEST I FORGET... WHAT I *AM*...

YEAH, WELL, YOU WOULDN'T BE THE *FIRST*...

I CALLED BY THE *FILM SET* TODAY AND PICKED UP A LITTLE PART-TIME *GOPHER WORK*. SOME OF THOSE *ACTORS*...

I THINK THEY JUST LOSE TOUCH WITH *REALITY*, Y'KNOW? IT AFFECTS THEIR *PERSONALITIES*...

IN... WHAT *WAY*...?

I DUNNO... MAYBE I'VE BEEN HANGIN' AROUND *YOU* TOO LONG, BUT THEY ALL SEEM *SO AGITATED* AND *HOSTILE*.

THERE'S A LOT OF *BAD BLOOD* GOING AROUND OUT AT THAT PLACE...

A LOT OF *TENSION*...

FORGET IT!

LISTEN, EITHER THAT LINE GOES OR I GO!

"AH'M MOST POWERFUL SORRY, MIZ REBECCA..." JEEZ! YOU SERIOUSLY EXPECT ME TO DO THIS *STEPPIN' FETCHIT* STUFF?

THAP!

DIRECTOR JAMES LINDER

SCRIPT

BILLY, IT'S *EARLY* STILL. ALL WE'RE DOING ARE SOME *PRELIM-INARY REHEARSALS* WHILE THEY *RENOVATE* THIS DUMP. WE'RE *CERTAINLY* NOT CLOSED TO INPUT ON A *SCRIPT LEVEL*. IF YOU DON'T *LIKE* THE LINE, WE'LL *CHANGE* IT.

IF ANYBODY'S OPEN TO *MY* INPUT, I SAY WE KEEP THE LINE AND GET RID OF *HIM!*

AW-GIE...

YOU HEAR *THAT*, MAN? YOU THINK I'M GONNA GET DOWN ON MY KNEES AND SAY "*AH'M MOST POWERFUL SORRY*" TO THE GREAT WHITE WHALE OVER THERE AFTER *THAT*?

WHAAT?

CHILDREN, *PLEASE*...

NOW, *LISTEN*, EVERYBODY. *CALM DOWN*, OKAY?

WE'LL JUST FINISH RUNNING THROUGH THIS SCENE AND THEN WE'LL CALL IT A *DAY*.

BILLY... JUST *TRY* TO DO IT. FOR *ME*. AND IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE LINE, *IMPROVISE!*

YEAH, WELL, JUST THIS ONE BIT, AND THAT'S *IT*.

FINE. OKAY, BILLY, WE'RE READY WHEN YOU ARE...

BILLY?

UHH...

YOU...

YOU LOOK BEAUTIFUL...

THAT'S GREAT! IT'S NOT IN THE SCRIPT, BUT IT'S GREAT! DO YOUR LINE SAME AS USUAL, ANGELA...

PLEASE.. TH-THOSE ARE NOT PROPER SENTIMENTS FOR SOMEONE OF YOUR STATION...

MISS CHARLOTTE, I...

I'M SORRY. I DIDN'T MEAN TO SPEAK OUTTA TURN

YOU GONNA HAVE TO TELL THE *MASTER* ABOUT THIS NOW?

N-NO NO, THAT WON'T BE *NECESSARY*...

TERRIFIC! BILLY, I *LOVE* THAT NEW DIALOGUE. WE'LL LEAVE IT IN. JUST TRY TO REMEMBER THAT ANGELA'S CHARACTER IS CALLED "*REBECCA*."

WHERE THE HELL DID "*CHARLOTTE*" COME FROM?

DIRECTOR DENNIS LINDER

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

CHARLOTTE?

BILLY, MY MAN! THAT WAS SOME HOT PERFORMANCE, BRO'...

HUH?

HEY, LISTEN, LEAVE ME ALONE, OKAY? AND QUIT WITH ALL THIS "MY MAN" STUFF. US COLORED FOLK DON'T SAY THAT ANYMORE!

B-BUT... BILLY, YOU KNOW I DON'T MEAN TO APPEAR PATRONIZING IN ANY WAY...

JUST SHOVE IT, OKAY?

I'M GONNA GO GET ME SOME SLEEP, SOMEPLACE AWAY FROM YOU TURKEYS...

JEEZ, WHAT IS IT WITH THOSE PEOPLE?

MAYBE HE JUST GOT TIRED OF YOU BEING SUCH AN INGRATIATING LIBERAL JERK ALL THE TIME!

Y'KNOW, FOR ONCE, I SYMPATHIZE WITH HIM!

HEY, WHY PICK ON ME? WHAT DID I DO?

C'MON, ANGIE... YOU STILL WANT TO DRIVE DOWN TO NEW ORLEANS FOR SEAFOOD TONIGHT, GET A CHANGE OF SCENERY?

NO, THANKS, RICHARD...

SUDDENLY, I LIKE THE SCENERY AROUND HERE JUST FINE.

... SO, LIKE, FROM WHAT I SAW, THEY JUST BITCH AND ARGUE ALL THE TIME. I DUNNO WHY I TOOK ON THE WORK OUT THERE. IT'S NOT LIKE I REALLY NEED THE MONEY...

JUST MORBID CURIOSITY, I GUESS.

THAT BILLY CARLTON ACTS SORT OF WEIRD. I HEARD HE DOES A LOT OF COCAINE AND STUFF, SO MAYBE...

PLEASE EXCUSE ME FOR ONE MOMENT

A BIRD? IS IT DYING?

IT'S THE DARK APPROACHES AND IT IS AFRAID.

HUSH, LITTLE ONE IT IS NOT SO TERRIBLE.

JUST LET GO OF THE FLESH, OF THE PAIN.

FEAR NOT, FOR THE UNIVERSE.. IS KIND..

I-II-IK::

THERE.

OH IS IT DEAD!?

ALEC?

UH, ALEC... WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH IT?

PLACING IT INSIDE ME THAT I MAY ABSORB ITS RICHES. AS IT DECAYS.

DEATH, SHALL NOURISH LIFE, AND NOTHING... SHALL BE WASTED

IS THIS... INCOMPREHENSIBLE... TO YOU..?

UH, NO..

NO, OF COURSE NOT. THAT'S WHAT I LIKE ABOUT LIVING WITH YOU.

SOMETHING NEW EVERY DAY.

July 29th
Offering of food to
Mâitresse Silverine
Offering of flowers to
Mâitresse Lorvana

HEY, WHAT'S WITH THE EXTRAS? WHERE DID ALL THE FLOWERS AND STUFF COME FROM?

GOD KNOWS. I GUESS IT'S SOMEBODY'S BIRTHDAY.

Y'KNOW, SOME OF THEM HAVE BEEN SLEEPING OUT HERE NIGHTS? YOU GO FIGURE.

Script

WELL, THEY SEEM HAPPY ENOUGH. HEY, WE REHEARSIN' INDOORS TODAY? THEY GOT IT FIXED UP?

NO, BUT THE FLOOR'S SAFE TO STAND ON, SO I THOUGHT WE'D RUN THROUGH ONE OF THE INTERIOR SCENES.

AH... HELLO, RICHARD. HELLO, ANGELA.

OKAY, IF EVERYBODY'S READY, WE'LL DO THE CONFRONTATION SCENE.

LISTEN, DENNIS... I'M STILL HAVING TROUBLE WITH THE CHARACTER HERE. THINKING LIKE A *RACIST* IS SO *DIFFICULT*...

SCRIPT

WHAT, AN' YOU THINK THINKIN' LIKE A *SLAVE* COMES ANY EASIER TO ME?

CARLTON, THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT, AND YOU KNOW IT...

OH, FOR GOD'S SAKE! WILL YOU TWO DROP IT! BILLY, IT'S YOUR CUE...

MR. DAVENPORT, I *RESENT* THESE THINGS YOU'RE SAYIN'!

FINE. OKAY, RICHARD?

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RICHARD?

RICHARD?!

YOU... RESENT...?

HOW DARE YOU?

YOU'RE NOT FIT TO SPEAK TO ME! YOU'RE NOT FIT TO LICK MY SHOES!

IT ISN'T YOUR PLACE TO RESENT ANYTHING!

THAP!

AAAA!

YOU PEOPLE ARE DAMNED LUCKY TO WORK HERE AT ROBERITALAND! DAMNED LUCKY!

THAP! THAP! THWAPP!

... AND YOU SAID YOU WERE HAVING PROBLEMS! RICHARD, THAT WAS FABULOUS!

ONE THING! WILL EVERYBODY PLEASE REMEMBER THAT ROBERITALAND IS THE NAME OF THE REAL PLANTATION. IN THE SHOW IT'S CALLED "PROVIDENCE."

UHH...

B-BILLY?

WHAT HAPPENED? JEEZ, I...I DIDN'T MEAN TO HIT YOU LIKE THAT...

HIT ME? WHAT IS THIS, SOME KINDA HEAD TRIP OR SOMETHIN'? HIT ME WITH WHAT?

UH...

OKAY, EVERYBODY. LET'S TRY SOMETHING FROM THE NEXT SCENE. CUT TO EVENING.

FROM THE DISTANT HOUSE .. THE SOUND OF PEOPLE LAUGHING... PEOPLE CLAPPING.. BORNE ON THE NIGHT WIND...

ABBY SAID... THAT THE EXTRAS.. OFTEN STAY OVER-NIGHT...

WHAT IS IT .. THAT ATTRACTS THEM... TO THIS DISMAL PLACE ..?

ONLY THIS GRAVEYARD STANDS SILENT... APART FROM THE MANSION.. FORGOTTEN AND OVERGROWN..

AROUND ITS PERIMETER... SOMEONE HAS DRAWN A PATTERN .. IN COARSE SALT... UPON THE BARE EARTH.

WHY?

TREADING... BETWEEN THE COLD STONES... I HAVE A SENSE ... OF OTHER PATTERNS... CONCEALED BENEATH THE WORLD'S SKIN...

BURIED MAZES... THAT STILL DETERMINE THE PATHS.. OF THOSE WHO WALK ABOVE.

WITHIN MY BREAST... THE BIRD IS ALMOST GONE... ITS GAITS BROKEN DOWN AND ABSORBED... ITS SPIRIT LONG SINCE FLOWN...

WERE... THE SPIRITS HERE ... AS LUCKY?

THEIR PRISON... HAS NOT BEEN ALLOWED... TO DECAY..

ACROSS THE FIELD.. THE RENOVATION CONTINUES... DE-COMPOSITION RUNNING IN REVERSE... AS IF TOWARDS A NEW BIRTH...

HOW LONG... WILL THIS STRANGE PREGNANCY ENDURE...?

HOW LONG.. BEFORE IT IS... COMPLETED?

August 25th Communion Table of Dan Wédo

ISN'T SHE A BEAUTY?

EVEN WORKING NIGHT AND DAY, I DON'T KNOW HOW THIS HOTEL GOT FIXED UP SO FAST!

I GUESS IT'S LIKE PATIENTS IN HOSPITALS... SOME PLACES JUST HAVE A WILL TO RECOVER...

WHEN DOES THE SHOOTING START?

IN FOUR DAYS TIME, YOU'VE ALL HAD LONG ENOUGH TO REHEARSE AND SOAK UP THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE LOCATION. I FIGURE WE'RE READY...

HMMM.

ONE THING'S FOR SURE... THEY'RE GETTING READY FOR SOMETHING!

THOSE AREN'T SPIRITUALS THEY'RE SINGING OUT THERE, Y'KNOW, THEY HAVE THEIR OWN RELIGIONS...

THOSE PEOPLE... THEY HAD GOOD JOBS AND GOOD PROSPECTS, BUT STICK 'EM OUT HERE, THEY REVERT TO TYPE!

UH . RICHARD? WHO ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

WHY, THE COLORED, OF COURSE.

WHO ELSE WOULD WE BE TALKING ABOUT?

UH... RICHARD, D-DON'T YOU MEAN "THE EXTRAS"?

SURE. THE EXTRAS. ISN'T THAT WHAT I SAID?

WONDER WHERE THE OTHERS ARE? PROBABLY INSIDE SOMEPLACE, PORING OVER THEIR LINES...

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CONTINUED ON NO PAGE FOLLOWING

CARLTON? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

OH. UH, LISTEN . I'D BE GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULDN'T TELL MY MANAGER ABOUT THIS. I, UM, I PROMISED I WOULDN'T DO IT AROUND THE SET...

I JUST, UH, I JUST GET KINDA *DEPRESSED* AROUND HERE. IT'S THIS PLACE, I...

LISTEN, ARE YOU GONNA TELL MY MANAGER?

NO. NO, THAT WON'T BE *NECESSARY.*

LISTEN, BILLY, I KNOW WE'VE HAD OUR DIFFERENCES, BUT... WELL, NEXT TO RICHARD, YOU DON'T LOOK SO BAD.

I HATE TO SEE YOU BECOME A *SLAVE* TO THIS *WHITE* JUNK. YOU DESERVE *BETTER.*

MUCH BETTER

I SUPPOSE THAT ONCE *SHOOTING* STARTS NEXT *THURSDAY,* WE'LL BE SEEING A LOT OF EACH OTHER. MAYBE I CAN HELP TAKE YOUR MIND OFF THIS STUFF.

WELL, UH, *THANKS,* CHARLOTTE, I'D LIKE THAT A LOT...

THAT'S "ANGELA."

STRAIGHTEN YOURSELF OUT, BILLY, KEEP AWAY FROM THE *WHITE* LINES...

August 29th

Mystère L'orlenT

UH...HI! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

OH, MISTRESS, I'M SORRY! I DIDN'T SEE YOU THERE...

"MISTRESS"?

ALICE, IT'S ME, ABBY CABLE. I HELP WITH THE KIDS UP AT ELYSIUM LANNS, WHERE YOU SERVE THE LUNCHES. YOU WORKING PART-TIME OUT HERE TOO?

UH... MRS. CABLE...?

I'M... I'M SORRY. I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU...

HEY, NO SWEAT. I'VE BEEN RUNNING AROUND THE SET ALL MORNING AND I'M PRETTY VACANT TOO. PLUS, I'M WORKING AT THE HOME THIS AFTERNOON!

TIM CABLE REST IN PEACE

THE HOME? OH... OH, YEAH SURE. .

HEY, WHAT'S WITH THE SALT? IS IT SOMETHING THE FILM PEOPLE ASKED YOU TO DO?

THEY TRYIN' TO KEEP SLUGG OUT OF THE GRAVEYARD HERE OR SOMETHING?

NO... NO, IT AIN'T FOR KEEPIN' NOTHIN' OUT.

I... I DUNNO. IT JUST FELT LIKE SOMETHIN' I OUGHTA DO, Y'KNOW?

UH, SURE... LISTEN, ALICE, THIS SUN IS GETTING PRETTY FIERCE. MAYBE YOU SHOULD GO INDOORS...?

OH, THE SUN DON'T WORRY ME, MISTRESS.

GONNA BE DARK SOON ENOUGH...

GONNA BE REAL DARK.

... LIKE, I SEE HER UP AT THE HOME EVERY DAY, BUT...

... I DUNNO. SHE ACTED REALLY CONFUSED.

IT'S THAT PLACE, IT'S GOT A REAL ATMOSPHERE HANGIN' OVER IT!

THE MORE I THINK ABOUT WHAT CONSTANTINE SAID, WITH LOUISIANA BEING NEXT AND EVERYTHING, THE MORE I THINK YOU SHOULD CHECK IT OUT.

I WENT THERE . SOME WEEKS AGO... THE ATMOSPHERE WAS STRANGE... BUT THERE WAS NOTHING... THAT I COULD DEFINE

IF IT HAS GROWN WORSE PERHAPS I SHOULD REVISIT THE PLACE...

PERHAPS TOMORROW...

ALEC, I DUNNO.. I THINK MAYBE WE SHOULD GO THERE TONIGHT.

I KNOW IT WAS THE FIRST DAY OF FILMING, BUT THE ATMOSPHERE AROUND THE SET WAS SO ELECTRIC

LIKE EVERYBODY WAS WAITING FOR SOMETHING.

VERY WELL... IF YOU ARE CONCERNED.. WE CAN GO THERE NOW..

RIGHT.

YOU, UH, AREN'T GOING TO SAY THAT IT'S TOO DANGEROUS AND THAT I SHOULD STAY HERE, OR ANYTHING?

I HAVE TOO GREAT A RESPECT... FOR YOUR STRENGTH... THE IDEA . WOULD BE RIDICULOUS.

UH, YEAH, YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT.

RIDICULOUS.

THIS IS RIDICULOUS! WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE SHOOTING NIGHT FOOTAGE AND EVERYBODY WANTS TO PARTY!

WHO GAVE ANYBODY PERMISSION TO LIGHT THESE FIRES?

WHERE'S CHARLOTTE?

WHAT?

I SAID "WHERE'S ANGELA?" I HAVEN'T SEEN HER AROUND ANYPLACE...

OH, WHO CARES? THIS WHOLE SHOW IS OUT OF CONTROL! NOBODY TAKES ANY NOTICE OF ME...

I MEAN, THAT COSTUME YOU'RE WEARING, IT ISN'T THE ONE I SPECIFIED...

DENNIS, I ASKED IF YOU'D SEEN ANGELA!

UH... WELL, YEAH, I THOUGHT I SAW HER AND BILLY GO INSIDE EARLIER ON. WHAT OF IT?

ANYWAY, I THOUGHT SHE'D BEEN GIVIN' YOU THE COLD SHOULDER LATELY, WHY...?

INSIDE? TOGETHER??

YEAH, SO WHAT? LISTEN, RICHARD, I DON'T HAVE TO PUT UP WITH THIS MADNESS! MY CONTRACT SAYS I NEEDN'T TOLERATE UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOR! WANNA READ IT?

YOU TWO! COME WITH ME!

RIGHT AWAY, MISTER WESLEY...

SNAP

IT'S IN MY CONTRACT, RICHARD!

IN BLACK AND WHITE!

BILLY?

WHAT ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT?

I... I DUNNO. I JUST FEEL LIKE THERE'S SOMETHING *WRONG* WITH ALL THIS... Y'KNOW, WITH *YOU* AND *ME* AND EVERYTHING...

I'VE BEEN AS HARD FOR ME, COMING TO TERMS WITH THIS.

LOOK AT ME, BILLY.

WE'RE FROM DIFFERENT *BACKGROUNDS*, BUT WE CAN *OVERCOME* THAT...

TONIGHT IS *SPECIAL*.

TONIGHT THERE'S JUST US, WILLIAM. THE REST OF THE WORLD DOESN'T *MATTER*.

MISS CHARLOTTE, I'M SO AFRAID...

JUST *HOLD* ME, WILLIAM. NOTHING WILL HAPPEN, I PROMISE YOU. EVERYTHING WILL BE...

...FINE

WELL, *WHAT* HAVE WE *HERE*?

R-RICHARD?

RICHARD, WHAT'S GOING ON?

WHAT'S GOING ON OUT THERE? WHAT ARE ALL THESE *FIRES* FOR?

ABBY... YOU WERE *RIGHT*... ABOUT THIS PLACE...

THERE IS... SOMETHING *ROTTEN* HERE...

CHARLOTTE, YOU ARE *TAINTED*. YOU ARE *REPULSIVE* TO ME. DO YOU *UNDERSTAND*?

REPULSIVE.

OH, THAT'S *SICK*! ALEC, LOOK WHAT THEY'RE DOING TO THAT *CHICKEN*...

THEY DO NOT... *NOTICE* US. THERE IS SOMETHING... *POSSESSING* THEM...

SOMETHING... *INHUMAN*...

THIS... *THING* THAT YOU HAVE CONSORTED WITH IS LOWER THAN AN *ANIMAL*!

BETWEEN YOU, YOU'VE FOULED THE NAME OF *ROBERTA-LAND*. YOU ARE NO LONGER FIT TO BEAR MY CHILDREN.

KRAK!

OH, NO. OH, WESLEY, PLEASE...

PLEASE... MR. *LINDER*? CAN SOMEBODY TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON?

I... I DON'T *KNOW*. I CAN'T *THINK* STRAIGHT... I KEEP GETTING *PICTURES* IN MY *HEAD*...

TERRIBLE PICTURES... ALL THAT *BLOOD*... ALL THAT *CRUELTY*...

CONCLUDED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

NOW... CHARLOTTE HERE HAS OFTEN SAID THAT WE'RE ALL NO DIFFERENT BENEATH THE *SKIN*. I PROPOSE WE PUT THAT TO THE *TEST*.

TAKE THIS CREATURE DOWNSTAIRS TO THE CELLAR AND FLAY IT.

OH, GOD, WESLEY, DON'T...

MR. JACKSON... PLEASE, MR. JACKSON, I DIDN'T MEAN NO *HARM*. THE LADY ASKED ME *IN*...

MRS. JACKSON, TELL THEM TO LET GO OF ME...

WESLEY, I'LL DO *ANYTHING*! PLEASE STOP IT! *PLEASE*, WESLEY...

WESLEY? YOU'RE HURTING MY *ARM*! WHERE ARE YOU TAKING...?

YOU'RE COMING TO *WATCH*, CHARLOTTE. ALL RIGHT... OVER BY THAT *POST* WILL DO *FINE*!

NO! NO! NO NO NO NO NO! OH, GOD...

OH, GOD, ALEC, CAN YOU *FEEL* IT?

IT'S COMING TO *LIFE*! THE WHOLE PLACE IS COMING TO LIFE!

NOW...

SHALL WE BEGIN?

next:
STRANGE FRUIT

DC Comics Inc.
666 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10103

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You people had a lot to say about "The Nukeface Papers," so this month we're going to turn the floor over to you, and let you say it! See you next issue when Swamp Thing's caught up in "the night of the living dead" and other atrocities, as our current story reaches its unexpected conclusion!—Karen

Dear Crew,

SWAMP THING #35 was exceptional, as usual. The script was gritty yet poetic, squeezing every last drop of meaning from the words; the art was wonderfully dark and foreboding, with slimy things crawling around the edges of the panels and threatening our security (a story like this should threaten the reader, mind you).

Little things I like: the irony of the name "Blossomville"; the imaginative cover; the constantly falling fruit bursting with a rotten sound; the awful decay of Bob/Ed; Swampy's pathetic attempts at trying to get up after toched by Nuke-Face. So that's it for this issue's praise; why go on? You know you're doing this book right, I know you're doing it fantastically, and everyone knows this book is thought-provoking.

Which leads me onto the thoughts you provoked in me. It's frightening and sad that something as terrible as radioactive contamination can occur, but what's worse is that Nuke-Face still can't see how he's been used and abused by industry and government alike. Just as awful (and, to me, infuriating) is the "trust in God, if he didn't want it to happen he would have stopped it" attitude, as exemplified by Wallace Monroe and his "Treasure." People must think for themselves, not believe the words of some smiling official telling you how the radioactive leak is "small," posing "minimal danger"; we all know how deadly the stuff is, how it and chemical toxins can kill for centuries or millennia in the most horrible way, genetically.

The signs are everywhere; the wind-blown newspaper reports throughout the issue pointed this out. Companies are negligent; the tragedy of Bhopal demonstrated this. And in a world where governments provide money so they can reap the plutonium benefits from the nuclear power plants they finance, there's a terrible kind of self-fertilization that can only result in flowers like Blossomville. After the events of Bhopal, no one can say, "It was a dream ... I can ... forget it ... and return ... to sleep..." It's everyone's and everything's world and those we put in charge of looking after it can no longer be trusted to do so. That task falls to us.

Thank you for "The Nuke-Face Papers," part one. I eagerly look forward to part two.

Yours sincerely,
Mark Dito
13 Cameron Ave.
Earlwood 2206
Sydney, Australia

*****

Dear Ed,

May I first congratulate you on making SOTST the most unique and terrifying "mainstream" comic on the racks today. Alan, Steve, and John couldn't have happened to a better book. It is my humble opinion that SOTST is the sleeper of the decade. No hot air.

Just read #35 and although I was more than mildly freaked out by Steve and John's cryptic lilos, somehow the story was not sufficient to scare me. Let me explain.

Years ago they begun a multimillion-dollar lock and dam project on the Red River. Although the dam meant jobs, we Louisiana folk have often wondered just why we needed one. What unholy bargain had our governor sealed? Playing know-it-all, I've often suggested that the dams were built to make the Red River navigable enough to transport nuke and/or toxic waste to dump sites in LA.

Early this year, we in Louisiana will have a living, functioning nuclear plant right in Saint Francisville. St. Francisville is located about 30-40 miles north of Baton Rouge. This plant is less than 50 miles from my home and family. Now THIS is sufficient enough to scare me! To my knowledge, this is LA's first nuke plant (I found out about this one only recently by accident) and with all the rotten places to locate it, St. Francisville was chosen.

St. Francisville, by the way, is one of the most beautiful places in LA (or the world for that matter). She's covered with huge ancient oaks and antebellum homes. It impresses even myself and I invite everyone to come take a look at her soon ... just in case.

Now, assuming the new nuke waste *does* come up the Red River, it will pass within a mile from my home. What I'm getting to is that NO fiction can match the reality of what nuke waste and steam can do. In light of this (EXCUUUUSE that pun), what we need is to form solutions and decisions about nukes. Preaching its "disadvantages" only bores people unequipped to understand. SOTST #35 was a valiant effort, and although the story was entertaining (that IS its major purpose, isn't it?), I'm afraid it's simply that. Entertaining.

I urge all anti-nukes to get smart about nuke laws and unite. U-N-I-T-E.

In the future it would be interesting to see Swampy journey to St. F. And although our new plant doesn't see much media coverage (LA's motto—"Hide it!"), I'll try to keep you posted. In the meanwhile, call me Nuke-Face. If you'll excuse me now, Ed, I need (heh heh) a drink.

Yours,
JP Shannon
Star Rt., Box 9
Effie, LA 71331

*****

Dear Alan, Stephen, John, John, and Tatjana,

SWAMP THING #35 is another instant classic. Yeah, I know, everybody says that about every issue now, but it's particularly true this time. The allegorical correlation between vagrant alcoholism and reactionary patriotism was chillingly brilliant. The first victim was a hippie radical, no less! When I say that this is like a Lovecraftian Gothic rendition of the "Snowbirds Don't Fly" issue of GREEN LANTERN/GREEN ARROW, I'm not just name-dropping!

Nukeface is a horror we all bear in the recesses of our fearful collective unconscious. The trepidous premonition that nuclear disaster is inevitable haunts us all. An entropic personification of such a cataclysm, bonded to the telltale characteristics of its misinformed and myopic (and ultimately self-destructive) supporters, however, is almost too accurate in its irony.

Thank you very much for providing some reverse-propaganda (as in Pasko's #8) on the Nuclear Issue. God knows, we need it. I hope SWAMP THING #35 has a profound effect on your younger readers, if not the adults. For some of us (adults), our political views are too entrenched and Orwellian to see the forest for the trees. Youth, in its pristine ignorance, has yet to learn "the ramifications of sociopolitical complexities." Guess what, kids, the adults are wrong! Politics is the amoral handmaiden of the likes of Uncle Arcane. Ever hear the saying "War is Life; Peace is Death"? Church of Satan founder Anton LaVey

wrote that. Isn't it curious, then, that government is based on this credo? The Harnessed Atom is the worst affront to God ever perpetrated by man; it kills *everything!* Thank You for bringing this fact to attention.

Yours Truly,
Steven Feldman
50 Barnes Street
Providence, RI 02906

*****

Dear People,

I have been listening to all the talk about the new, high-quality, thinking-being's SWAMP THING for some time now, but I was sure I wasn't interested in it. And besides, I figured, that talk I was hearing was probably wrong. But I contined to hear praises, and being a fairly intelligent and (above all) open-minded person, I finally went out and bought a few.

To coin a phrase, the rumors were right. This stuff is good. My initial purchase was #'s 31-34 plus the annual, and I must say I'm impressed with the way a clichéd horror creature has been turned into the focus of intellectual discussion of our world. I am currently gathering #'s 20-30.

I have also just read the brand-new #35, and while I agree with the view of nuclear fission (though the point was a bit overdone?) I would like to note that there is a huge difference between that and nuclear *fusion*. I am constantly amazed at the number of people, intelligent people, who do not seem to know that while fission produces vast amounts of harmful waste, the process of fusion does not. Fission yields energy from the release of forces in the nucleus of an atom by splitting it, thereby leaving the leftover parts that were not released as energy. Fusion does almost the opposite. By fusing together the atoms of hydrogen, there are derived two basic products: energy and helium. There are no vast amounts of radioactive waste.

These are simplified explanations, but they are basically accurate. I give them here for the benefit of anyone who did not realize there were two types of nuclear power, or who did not know what the difference was.

Of course, there may always turn out to be problems with nuclear fusion, but few if any are foreseen now. The only current problem is that we can't do it yet—we're still several years away from that technology (plus or minus more years based on funding or a lack of it). Potentially the process for fusion might involve some drawback, but as I said, none are foreseen.

The problem of finding an energy source for the future is the greatest one humanity has faced. And that "future" is only 20 or 30 years away. Either something is done now, or there will be a massive collapse of civilization the likes of which the world has never known. It does not help that the news is full of the latest on "the oil glut" in the OPEC countries. The fact is that oil sources are finite and are running out.

Nuclear fission is not the answer we want to have, but as of now there is no answer at all. Some safe and adequate energy source must be found. Perhaps nuclear fusion is that source, but in any case let us hope that one is found.

Phew. I guess that's my lecture for today. Now everyone go out and find a safe energy source. And hey, Alan, Steve, John, Karen, Tatjana (great name), and John—keep up the good work, it keeps us all thinking.

Thanx,
Sivan S. Wall
2000 J St., #6
Lincoln, NE 68510

*****

Dear Karen,

"The Nukeface Papers part I" (SOTST #35) hit close to home. And I mean close!

In that melange of newspapers on page 3, there's an article on toxic fumes killing two men and hospitalizing a third man in serious condition. If you scrutinize the print closely, you'll see the event took place behind a Howard Johnson's restaurant. When the misfortune occurred, I lived across the street from that very same HoJo's. (Or perhaps I lived across the street from the Earth-Prime counterpart of that very same HoJo's?)

All in all, a good issue, served up dark and gloomy, just the way I like it. I guess Tatjana Wood deserves some of the credit for that.

Just when Swampy was starting to look invincible, he's felled—by toxicity.

Take care,
Arthur Vidro
241 Maple Place
Mineola, NY

*****

Dear Editor:

SWAMP THING #35 was realistically handled, as have been all issues since number 20. The visions of total destruction on pages 6, 7, 11, and 13 are so breathtaking and impressive that you can't take your eyes off of them. There is a warning hidden in these panels; a warning to the world powers, including America. The emotions present are heart-stopping, topped only by the silvery tear shed by Swampy on page 13, panel 2.

He sees there is a job to do and does it, no matter what. Thank you for a true hero.

Most Sincerely,
Rex Gambill
109 Stonefield Court
Warner Robins, GA 31093

*****

Dear Editor,

Just read SWAMP THING #35, "The Nukeface Papers" part one, and while it wasn't quite as blatantly horrific as other recent issues, it certainly had its moments. The subject of the tons and tons of hazardous waste material that are accumulating in the United States, with no 100% safe and sound method for its disposal, is probably one of mankind's most potentially lethal problems—particularly under the leadership of Ronald Reagan, whose sympathies obviously lie with corporate business and not with the environmentalists. I suppose it will be up to some future generation to come to grips with it, since the present one seems inclined to pooh-pooh it under the rug.

Yours truly,
Gary Kimber
80 Searle Ave.
Ontario, Canada

*****

Dear DC,

I loved the plot of SWAMP THING #35. You should think about putting this issue out and telling people "this is how it feels when someone dumps toxic waste in your backyard." I'm serious, guys! You should even send home copies to Congress, the President, and his friends. You never know! It sure wouldn't hurt, in fact, it might help the Prez get off his arms kick and show him what his little games are doing to people and Swamp Things!

Sincerely,
Scott O'Diemo
(no address given)

*****

Dear muck-encrusted people,

I started reading the new SWAMP THING with #29 and have been hopelessly hooked ever since. Are you sure you don't put some addictive substance in the ink that is seeping into our systems through our fingers? The suspense, the art, and especially the refreshing *originality* ... I've never seen *anything* like this before, people!

"The Nukeface Papers" proves my point. The character of Nukeface is disturbing enough, but then we have that underlying horror throughout the story ... that unmistakable sense that all is not right and that we can't do anything but let the creative team lead us into whatever dark corridors they wish ... this is beautifully orchestrated terror. Only a couple of Stephen King's better novels brings up this sense of uneasiness. (And, for some reason, I *like* it...!)

My vote for this year's Most Unforgettable Scene in Comics: On page 21, we see the Swamp Thing, of all characters in the DC Universe, backed up against a tree recoiling from Nukeface, whispering (ironically), "What ... *are* ... you?"

I eagerly await SWAMP THING #36. How can you *possibly* top this last issue? Funny, though ... I say that about *every* issue ... and you always do!

Michal Jacot
404 East State St.
East Tawas, MI 48730